



Bill Proctor
Commissioner • District 1

October 2, 2019

Ashley Moody
State of Florida Attorney General
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Nikki Fried
Florida Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Complaint Against Tallahassee Hotel Operators – Request for Investigation

Dear Attorney General and Commissioner of Agriculture:

I file this letter, on behalf of the Public as a formal complaint soliciting your investigation and review of price gouging practices of Tallahassee area Hotel leaders and companies against the parents, alumni, supporters and constituents of Florida State University and Florida A&M University. The collective wrongful-greed filled actions conspire to make access to University functions a possibility for the financial elite only.

On behalf of the public, I contend that:

1. Hotel prices drastically increase in Tallahassee in accordance with major university events like graduations, family parents' weekend, homecoming, football games, and other special occasions associated with FAMU and FSU sponsored activities.
2. The spike in prices is intentionally calculated and set in direct proximity of FSU and FAMU events outlined in point #1. Price preying upon FSU and FAMU constituents adversely affect these universities and their public support.
3. The spiked prices are a dubious factor in driving would-be supporters from coming to Tallahassee to attend various university events. Spiked hotel prices place a chilling effect on the attendance of public events for both universities.

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4. Neither university receives a profit or share from the bed taxes their activities generate for the local tourist development council. Their generation of profits is enormous for local hotels whose cost block other business-like restaurants from earning more.
5. Hardship is fostered upon the families of students desiring to attend graduation ceremonies at both public universities. High prices work against the families of students who have invested big dollars into our local economy. Many families can not attend university athletic events because they cannot afford hotel room rates.
6. Price setting is when Corporate Hotel Bigs gather themselves to collaborate in the upward charges leveled against the consumer public. There exists a long observable pattern of price-fixing that is tied directly to FAMU & FSU events outlined in point #1.
7. Price fixing against the public violates the Interstate Commerce clause which addresses Interstate travel and discrimination and discriminatory practices. Hotels cannot be exempted from state and federal rules which seek to protect consumers against price fraud.
8. By setting room rates that double and triple the norm posted on the internet these Tallahassee hotels defame and cast a hustler's image upon the Capital City of Florida. These hotel leaders are basking in their hustler's paradise at the significant expense of FSU & FAMU supporters. These hustling habits are not exhibited against any other constituent groups by comparison.

Your tracking of the hotel accounting records and prices over the past 7 years by dates associated with FAMU/FSU events will reveal the pattern of discrimination and hustling that is wrong, immoral and hurtful to the reputation, name and honor of Florida's Capital City. These wrongful practices of hotel price gouging hurt the events sponsored by FSU/FAMU alike.

Hotels are wrongfully profiting from practices that violate federal interstate commerce rules and likewise they allegedly set bait and switch traps for travelers who expected to be charged one price, but after staying their rates were switched to a higher price. Bait and switch advertising and quoting is wrong. I encourage your immediate review of hotel pricing practices in Tallahassee, Florida on behalf of citizens.

Requested Action

Resulting from the collective acts and practices of Tallahassee Hotel Leaders, I request the following:

1. Conduct a thorough 7-year review of hotel pricing associated with FAMU/ FSU all sports games, graduations, and special university occasions.
2. Determine the validity of the facts as complained of in this complaint.
3. Order the appropriate sanctions, penalties and legal actions to foster the economic fair practices which FSU and FAMU deserve to receive for its supporter.
4. Price gouging is supposed to protect travelers seeking safety during hurricanes. Price gouging, likewise, should not be cast upon travelers who happen to support FAMU & FSU public events. Please grant a cease and desist to protect the public from this greed driven economic practices against the public
5. Prosecute all cases that are warranted.

Thank you for your review and attention to this important legal and economic matter. Your intervention is greatly needed to protect consumers associated with FSU & FAMU from the unfair business entities who drive so many away and who are unfairly gaming citizens who seek to stay overnight in public accommodation facilities in Leon County, Florida.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Proctor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Proctor
Leon County
District 1